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16 July 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Energy Research and Development
Administration

SUBJECT : Greek Internal Security

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1. Prime Minister Caramanlis has given Greece nearly two years of strong, effective government since he returned to power in the aftermath of the military junta's misadventure on Cyprus in July 1974. He has largely rehabilitated Greece's international image--in particular strengthening Greek ties to Western Europe, made some progress in reviving the country's economy, shored up its defenses and tried generally to heal the wounds of the junta period. At the same time, however, Caramanlis' efforts to institutionalize democratic rule are meeting increasing resistance, and there are signs that the [redacted] partisanship that frustrated earlier attempts to give Greece stable government is again beginning to emerge.

2. Caramanlis recognizes that the military--deeply imbued with the junta mentality--remains a long-term threat to democratic government and has sought to maintain the confidence of the officer corps. He has worked to tone down vindictive efforts by the left to punish all officers involved with the junta and has effectively utilized Defense Minister Averoff--a longtime favorite with the military--to assure individual officers that their careers are safe. In general his policies have worked, although there has been a continuing undercurrent of concern among the officers over the prime minister's willingness to allow the extreme left to operate as a legitimate political force. Some junta diehards and monarchists continue to plot against the government, but they are reportedly leaderless and disorganized.

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3. In recent months growing anti-government and anti-US agitation by the extreme left has convinced Caramanlis that the left represents a more immediate threat to internal security and political stability than does the right. Radical socialist leader Andreas Papandreou is constantly seeking ways to embarrass Caramanlis and register his strong opposition to the US military presence in Greece. Several of his followers were caught earlier this year trying to smuggle arms into Greece for use in protests against the US bases there. In May Papandreou partisans and members of the Moscow-backed Communist Party of the Exterior--one of three communist factions in Greece--protested a new labor law and prevented the landing of liberty parties from the US Sixth Fleet. The small, militant Revolutionary Communist Party had on several earlier occasions demonstrated its abilities as a disruptive force.

4. Concerned that the growing leftist agitation might eventually prompt another move by the military, Caramanlis in May abandoned his previous attempts to follow a middle-of-the-road course and lashed out at Papandreou and the Moscow-backed Communists by name for their roles in the disturbances. He declared that the principal danger to democracy in Greece now lay on the left. The security services--dominated by a conservative political mentality and chafing under the restraints Caramanlis had imposed in an effort to give the left a legitimate political voice--were ready to take action.

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